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CONTENTS

Section Paragraphs

1. Introduction

1.1 Basic information about the school
Intake of pupils and the area served by the school

1.3 School data and indicators

1.4 Record of the evidence base of the inspection

2. Main findings and Key Issues for Action

2.1 Standards, quality, efficiency and ethos
Key issues for action

3. Standards and Quality

3.1 Standards of achievement

3.2 Quality of learning

4. Efficiency of the school

5. Pupils' Personal Development and Behaviour

5.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Behaviour and discipline

5.3 Attendance

6. Subjects of the Curriculum and Other Curricular Provision: Subject Evidence Form

7. Factors Contributing to the Findings

Quality of teaching

7.2 Assessment, recording and reporting

7.3 The Curriculum



- i) quality and range
 - ii) equality of opportunity
- 7.4 Provision for pupils with special educational needs
- 7.5 Organisation and administration
- 7.6 Resources and their management
 - i) teaching and support staff
 - ii) resources for learning
 - iii) accommodation
- 7.7 Pupils' welfare and guidance
- 7.8 Links with parents, agencies and other institutions

Summary of judgement focusing statements

- i) Whole School
- ii) Subjects and aspects

1. INTRODUCTION

This inspection was carried out under Section 9 of the Education (Schools) Act 1992 to report on the quality of education provided by the school, the educational standards achieved in the school, whether the financial resources made available to the school are managed efficiently, and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school. The findings of the inspection will contribute to the annual report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools to the Secretary of State for Education.

1.1 Basic Information About the School

References: Headteacher's Form

Name of school : COLNE Ss JOHN FISHER & THOMAS
MORE ROMAN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Type : 11-16 COMPREHENSIVE

Status : VOLUNTARY AIDED

Age range of pupils : 11-16

Name of Headteacher : MR PETER DONNELLY

School address, postcode
and telephone number : GIBFIELD ROAD
COLNE
LANCS
BB8 8JT

Name of appropriate authority : Fr MICHAEL KUJACZ
(governing body, LEA or CHAIR OF GOVERNORS
proprietor)

Address (if different from the : St JOHN SOUTHWORTH PRESBYTERY
above) 18 MACLEOD STREET
NELSON
LANCS
BB9 7HE

Local authority area in which : LANCASHIRE EDUCATION AUTHORITY
the school is located



DFE school number : 923 4861

Name of Registered Inspector : WILLIAM SYDNEY DELLER

Date of the inspection : 4TH - 8TH OCTOBER, 1993

1.2 Intake of Pupils and the Area Served by the School

1. The school is situated on an open site between the towns of Colne and Nelson. It serves the seven Catholic parishes of the district of Pendle in Lancashire. 90% of the intake of the school is Catholic. Pupils come from a large catchment area and a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. They represent the full range of ability but with a smaller proportion of less able and very able pupils than would be expected in a normal distribution. About 6% of them are from ethnic minority groups. Five pupils have statements of special educational needs and a further 65 pupils are entitled to additional teaching support. Approximately 13% are eligible for free school meals. In 1992 62% of the pupils stayed in full time education after the age of 16.

1.3 School Data and Indicators

PUPILS

<u>Number of Pupils in Each Year Group</u>				
		Boys	Girls	Total
	Year 7	67	72	139
59	126		Year 8	67
Year 9	65	126		
Year 10	69	56	125	
Year 11	65	55	120	
School total,	333	303	636	

Special Educational Needs

Number of pupils having statements of special educational needs	5
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Free School Meals

Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals	12.7
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Teachers and Classes

Full-time equivalent teachers	37.5
Pupil:Teacher ratio	16.96



Percentage class contact		77.25
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Average teaching group size	21.96	
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Teaching time per week

	Hours	Minutes
Key Stage 3	22	54
Key Stage 4	22	54

Pupil Attendance (percentages)

	LAST ANNUAL REPORT TO PARENTS ¹		THIRD WEEK IN THE TERM BEFORE THE INSPECTION	
	Unauthorised absence	Actual attendance	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
Year 7	0.1	95.4	4.6	0
Year 8	0.6	93.7	6.3	0
Year 9	0.4	92.1	7.9	0
Year 10	0.5	91.3	8.7	0
Year 11	1.5	84.3	15.7	0
Overall	0.6	91.3	8.6	0

Number of Exclusions in the Last 12 Months

	<u>TEMPORARY</u>		<u>INDEFINITE</u>		<u>PERMANENT</u>		Number from ethnic minorities	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
Year 7								
Year 8	6							
Year 9	3	1	1		1			
Year 10	6	2	2		2			
Year 11	2			2		2		
OVERALL								
TOTAL	15	3	2	3	2	3		

* Note for inspectors: Columns 1-6

National Curriculum Assessments

Key Stage 3

1993 Pilot SATs Results

The school took part in the 1992 (unpublished) pilot tests.

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Key Stage 4

Public Examination Results: GCSE

GCSE EXAMINATION RESULTS	SCHOOL RESULTS 1992			SCHOOL RESULTS 1993		
	BOYS	GIRLS	ALL	BOYS	GIRLS	ALL
Number of pupils in Year	62	61	123	61	59	120
Percentage of pupils...						
Entered for 5+ GCSEs	98.4	96.7	97.6	98.4	96.6	97.5
Achieving 5+ grades A-C	41.9	59.0	50.4	41.0	50.8	45.8
Achieving 5+ grades A-G	91.9	93.4	92.7	91.8	89.8	90.8
Entered for 1+ GCSEs	98.4	100.0	99.2	98.4	96.6	97.5
Achieving 1+ grades A-C	62.9	80.3	71.5	60.7	74.6	65
Achieving 1+ grades A-G	98.4	100.0	99.2	98.4	96.6	97.5
Entered for all three subjects, EN, MA and SC	90.3	91.8	91.1	91.8	93.2	92.5
Achieving grades A-C	30.6	21.3	26.0	36.1	33.9	35.0
Achieving grades A-G in all of EN, MA and SC	98.4	100	99.2	98.4	96.6	97.5
GCSE EXAMINATION	BOYS	LEA AREA		BOYS	ENGLAND	
		GIRLS	ALL		GIRLS	ALL
Percentage of pupils...						
Entered for 5+ GCSEs	-	-	-	83.3	88.4	85.8
Achieving 5+ grades A-C	-	-	37	30.4	39.7	35.0
Achieving 5+ grades A-G	-	-	80	79.0	85.3	82.0
Entered for 1+ GCSEs	-	-	-	92.1	57.8	90.5
Achieving 1+ grades A-C	-	-	63	57.8	70.0	63.8
Achieving 1+ grades A-G	-	-	91	90.5	93.3	91.9



Other qualifications taken by Year 11 students

Type of
Awarding
Level
Vocational
Entries
Results
Award
Body

Area

1. Cert.
C & G
Foundation

-

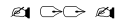
29
29 Pass

2. Cert.
RSA
Elementary
Core Text

40
40 Dist.

3. Cert.
Pitman
Elementary
Word Processing

34
32 First



2 Pass

4. Cert.
Pitman
Elementary
Eng. CT

39
38 First

1 Pass

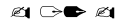
5. Cert.
Pitman
Elementary
French CT

30
29 First

1 Pass

6. Cert.
Pitman
Elementary
Spanish CT

18
16 First



2 Pass

7. Cert.
Salford Dioc
-
Religious Ed

32
12 Dist.

6 Merit,

14 Pass

8. Cert.
AEB
Basic
Graphics

17
11 Merit



5 Pass

9. Cert.
St Martins,
-
Language of

15
8 Pass

Lancaster

Work

10. Cert.
Lancs LEA
Basic
Maths

6
3 Pass

11. Cert.
Young
-
-

8
2 Pass

Enterprise

12. Cert.
Project
Work Exp. 36

Trident
Per Ch 58



Comm. Ser.27

Pupils' routes on leaving the school

Percentage of year group:

School/
Employment
Training
Other

Further

procedure

Education

Year 11

62%

10.5%

22%

5.5%

Financial Information

INCOME (£)		Last full	Current
financial year	year*	1993-94	
	1992-93		
Balance in brought forward	89,581	70,753	
Recurrent income; eg school budget share, annual maintenance grant (AMG), fees		1,151,012	1,162,160
Grants for school meals or meals AMG (where applicable)	-	-	
Specific grants, earmarked allocations or special purpose grants (excluding capital grants)	47,298	37,580	
Other income managed by the school; lettings, sales, donations, funds raised		13,137	462
TOTAL	1,301,028		
<hr/>			
EXPENDITURE (£)	Last full financial year	Budget allocation for current year	
Teaching staff	900,750	937,502	
Other staff		95,820	96,803
Educational resources		93,788	63,933
Premises costs	54,860	42,663	
Other costs		31,149	21,259
TOTAL	1,176,367	1,162,160	



Total expenditure per pupil (£)	1,915.90	1,827.29
Expenditure per pupil on educational resources (£)	152.74	100.52

1.4 Record of the Evidence Base for the Inspection

The team consisted of 13 inspectors. During the week 147 lessons, or parts of lessons, including lessons taken on link courses at the local tertiary college, were inspected; 18 registration sessions, 5 assemblies and a range of extra-curricular activities were visited. All full-time teachers, except for those teaching RE, were seen teaching at least once, and in many cases, several times. Over 40 planned discussions were held with members of teaching and non-teaching staff. Meetings were held with the full governing body, the Chair of the governors and the Chair of the finance committee. Inspectors looked at the written work of many pupils; all the available written work of a representative sample of six pupils from each year group was inspected. Planned discussions were held with some of these pupils and with pupils who have taken on positions of responsibility in the school. Less formal conversations took place with many more. A large number of documents provided by the school was read and analysed before and during the inspection. The Registered Inspector held a meeting attended by over 80 parents prior to the inspection and the team considered almost 400 responses from parents to a questionnaire concerning their opinions of the school. Letters were received from an employer who accepts pupils on work experience, from the local Training and Enterprise Council and from an education professional who works closely with the school. Three primary schools which send pupils to the school were visited.

2. MAIN FINDINGS AND KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

2.1 Main Findings

2. The school provides a good Catholic education for its pupils. At its heart lies a detailed mission statement. Governors, staff, pupils and parents are committed to its values and strive to fulfil them. Relationships throughout the school are excellent; there is an effective and caring pastoral system; the behaviour of the pupils is good and the school is an orderly and secure community. The headteacher and the senior management team provide purposeful and effective leadership in the spirit of the mission statement. Day to day administration is efficient. School life is enriched by a flourishing programme of extra-curricular activities.

3. The standards achieved by the pupils were good in the lessons observed and above average in public examinations. The proportion of them who achieve good grades at GCSE in at least five subjects is significantly above LEA and national averages. When the pupils' abilities are taken into account, their achievements are broadly in line with what might be expected.

4. The good quality of the teaching and the pupils' positive attitudes to learning are important strengths and the school benefits from an experienced and hard-working staff, but more should be done to share existing good practice among all teachers, expand the range of teaching methods, and adapt materials so that they are more closely suited to the abilities and interests of all pupils.

5. Although day to day administration is sound, the school is less good at longer term and strategic planning. Some heads of department have yet to fulfil their role as managers of the people, the resources and the

learning in their area. The current development plan lacks clear and costed priorities which would guide the work of departments, inform staff development, provide targets for more rigorous monitoring of progress and establish an agreed basis for evaluation. The school's policy for pupils with special educational needs has yet to be carried through into the work of all departments. Coherent and whole school arrangements for assessment, recording and reporting, linked to pupil attainment, would further enhance the already high standards of achievement.

2.2 Key Issues for Action

6. To raise the standards of an already good school the governors and senior management should:
 - Agree a detailed and costed school development plan with priorities, targets, responsibilities and deadlines, which are linked to departmental plans, give a clear role to heads of department and are capable of being monitored and evaluated.
 - Co-ordinate and improve in line with the existing policy the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
 - Establish effective whole school policy and practice on pupil assessment, recording and reporting.
 - Ensure that statutory national curriculum requirements are met in aspects of Modern Foreign Languages and in Technology at Key Stage 3 and in Technology at Key Stage 4.
 - Review the length and organisation of the teaching day in order to ensure effective delivery of the Programmes of Study in all subjects.
 - Consider as a whole school the styles of teaching and learning that pupils experience and modify methods where necessary.
 - Improve procedures for the marking and recording of attendance in order to comply with regulations in Circular 11/91.

3. STANDARDS AND QUALITY

3.1 Standards of Achievement

7. Almost all pupils are entered for at least one subject at the General Certificate of Secondary Education; most are entered for five or more. The numbers achieving five A-C grades and the numbers achieving five A-G grades are both significantly above LEA and national averages.

8. In 1993, standards at GCSE were good in English, mathematics, statistics, science (Dual Award), Religious Education, drama and Business and Information Studies. They were also good in history and geography although these subjects tend to attract the more able pupils. Standards at GCSE were less than satisfactory in CDT, home economics and integrated humanities. History, geography and integrated humanities form a complete option group. The overall



results of the pupils in these subjects do not reflect what could have been achieved by this whole year group, given the ability range. GCSE results in other subjects were satisfactory. The percentage of GCSE grade A's gained was slightly below the national average.



9. The GCSE results are largely compatible with the capabilities of the pupils and in some subjects pupils achieve better results than their general ability would suggest. The high standards reflect the good levels of attendance in the school; few pupils fail to meet coursework requirements. The lower than average percentage of A grades, however, reflects the ability intake of the school. Standardised tests suggest that the school receives more pupils of middle ability than an average comprehensive school with the full ability range.
10. In 1992, the school participated in the Key Stage 3 pilot tests in mathematics and science. In both tests the attainment of the school's pupils was not significantly different from the national average. The school was asked to provide the inspectors with the results of NC Key Stage 3 assessments attained by Year 9 pupils in Summer 1993, but elected not to do so. It is therefore not possible to evaluate these results or to use them to help draw conclusions about the standards of work in the school.
11. Pupils' standards of achievement against national norms in three quarters of lessons observed were satisfactory or better. They were good or very good in 30% of lessons seen. Judged against the pupils' own capabilities, standards of achievement were satisfactory or better in 90% of lessons observed and good or very good in 40%. Performance was equally good at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Work of outstanding quality was rare but, on the other hand, very poor standards were even rarer.
12. Standards achieved in English are good in both Key Stages 3 & 4. Particularly high standards were observed in oracy. Standards achieved in mathematics were satisfactory or better at Key Stage 4 in all lessons seen and half of these were good or very good. At Key Stage 3 standards achieved were broadly similar with nearly 80% being satisfactory or better. In science, standards were generally satisfactory or better at both Key Stages. In other subjects standards are generally sound.
13. Speaking and listening is good across the curriculum. During group work pupils support one another in expressing opinions and ideas; they are able to listen attentively and to discuss work with confidence and understanding. Drama, involvement in extra-curricular activities and (the) public speaking competitions have made additional contributions to acquiring these skills. It is likely that achievement would be higher if pupils were given the opportunity in all curriculum areas to contribute more actively in lessons.
14. In most subjects writing is at least satisfactory. Sometimes, however, tasks demanded of middle and lower ability pupils did not match their needs and pupils did not always understand what was expected of them. A wide range of writing is undertaken across the curriculum and older pupils especially are encouraged to take responsibility for their own coursework. Across the curriculum standards of presentation vary.
15. Standards of reading aloud are higher than might be expected, particularly with lower ability sets. The range and standard of reading material used in class varies from subject to subject. Departments should monitor more closely the level of the reading materials they present to pupils.



16. Standards of numeracy are satisfactory. Opportunities are given in mathematics to use and apply number, but there were fewer opportunities for handling data. Numeracy is also developed through science, geography, technology and statistics and Business and Information Studies. Graphical skills are also used and developed competently in geography and technology.

3.2 Quality of Learning

17. The quality of learning was satisfactory or better in about 90% of lessons observed. In over half it was good or very good. Pupils in the main are co-operative, hard-working and well behaved. They listen attentively to teachers and to each other. They ask questions and are keen to participate in the lessons.

18. Learning of good quality was seen in all subjects and pupils are generally making substantial gains in knowledge, understanding and skills. Where the quality of learning was less than satisfactory the work was not matched to pupils' abilities or teaching methods were over didactic, inflexible or lacking variety. Given the opportunity, however, pupils are able to take responsibility for their work, to develop their own ideas and to sustain learning without relying on the teacher.

19. Pupils perform well in groups. In the best work they are sensitive to the others in the group, help each other to make points or express opinions, are self disciplined in keeping to the task in hand, ask relevant questions and are able to summarise conclusions verbally or in writing.

20. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use information technology across the curriculum. Library provision is generally good but is uneven and inadequate in some subjects.

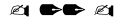
21. Homework, although set regularly in most subjects, is not always seen as a way of developing independent learning, but simply of finishing off work begun in class.

22. Pupils learn physical skills successfully in aspects of art, music, technology and physical education. They perform creatively in music, drama and physical education. In many subjects they think rigorously and absorb knowledge. They are generally eager to learn. Sometimes, however, they are merely receivers of information or instruction rather than being actively involved in their own learning.

4. EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

23. The Governors' Finance Committee has a broad and detailed overview of all financial matters and a clear understanding of their responsibilities. Financial planning is carried out by the Senior Management Team which channels budgetary proposals to the Finance Committee through the other governors' committees.

24. The school currently operates on a tight budget. An underspend of £89,581 from 1990-92 has been reduced by subsequent expenditure as well as by a deficit from 1992-93 of £24,367. There is limited flexibility to respond to change resulting from any rise in pupil numbers, to any consequent building needs or to staffing change. The school will also be faced with the end of TVEI funding and of transitional funding following the introduction of LMS, which was £13,685



in 1993-94.



25. The budget is spent largely within LEA notional funding allocations and unit costs are broadly average for a school of this size and type within the LEA. Actual allocations by the Governors' Finance Committee have sometimes been higher than the national allocation. In particular the staffing budget is larger by some £23,000 than the notional allowance. The school has a high proportion (77.3%) of its staff on responsibility allowances and the governing body has limited the number of allowances to two persons to avoid overload. The school should keep under review the distribution of responsibilities and their associated job descriptions to ensure that the way in which these tasks are allocated and carried out are efficient and effective.

26. The quality and quantity of resources for teaching and learning are good with the exception of text-book provision in Key Stage 3 for history and geography and of aspects of the non-fiction library stock. The development of the library is, however, a current priority within the school development plan.

27. Sufficient, appropriately qualified staff are effectively deployed to meet the demands of the curriculum. Locally based support staff work productively in the classroom with pupils with statements of special educational need. The school makes use of link courses at local colleges to add to GCSE provision in PE, art, drama and technology.

28. Teaching time per week, at 22 hours 54 minutes in both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, is relatively low, particularly for pupils in Key Stage 4. This is an issue which the school should address, especially since the ten minutes registration time at the end of the day is sometimes not productively used.

29. Financial administration is carried out efficiently by the bursar and her assistant. The headteacher and the relevant deputy head, working with the Governors' Finance Committee, operate most of the control of planning and expenditure. Monthly checks are made on spending at Finance Committee meetings and the Bursar, who attends these meetings, keeps an ongoing check on all outgoings. The most recent Audit Report records that financial administration is sound, though some criticisms were made, principally of accounting errors, virement procedures, the administration of lettings and stock checking. The governing body has accepted the report and the recommendations for action and is taking steps to implement them.

30. The school does not monitor formally the efficiency and effectiveness of its financial planning. The development plan is as yet imperfectly linked to the budget and performance indicators are not used to monitor and evaluate major spending decisions.

31. In order for the school to be able to evaluate whether it provides value for money in all aspects of school life a structure for the formal monitoring and evaluation of its budgetary systems and policies and their links with management and the curriculum should be considered.



5. PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOUR

5.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

32. The school has well-established values clearly laid down in its mission statement. It tries to create a community of faith in which the individual is valued and encouraged to develop in a caring Catholic environment.

33. High standards of behaviour are demanded and pupils are encouraged to seek out and to accept responsibility in a spirit of service to others. The school sees itself as a community in partnership with the home and the parish and works towards that end. It is a well-ordered community with a clear code of conduct. Pupils are expected to respect others, their property and the environment.

34. All pupils attend assemblies each week and extended tutor periods on other days. These are well used to promote pupils' spiritual and moral development through prayer and reflection. The school should consider how it can build upon existing good practice to ensure that there is consistent quality across the school and that the time allocated at the end of the day is effectively used by all form tutors.

35. There is a clear pastoral system in place. The form tutor is supported by the head of year and by the senior management team. Individuals or groups of pupils with difficulties are quickly identified and helped. Important elements in this support network are the school counsellor and the school nurse. They provide an extra dimension to the system and are appreciated by pupils and staff.

36. The school ethos is observable in the good quality of the relationships between the various groups that make up the school community. Many pupils are prepared to work for the benefit of others in school, in the local community and, through charitable works, in the wider world.

37. At Key Stage 3 there is a structured personal and social education programme. At Key Stage 4 pupils are given the opportunity to experience a residential personal development course. Many pupils take advantage of these courses.

38. There are few social areas for pupils' use in the school, except for a Year 11 common room, which is small and poorly furnished. The arrangements for the storage of bags, particularly at lunchtime, are inadequate.

39. There are opportunities for prayer, liturgy and celebration in the school. These should be further enhanced by involving clergy on a more structured basis. The chapel provides an excellent resource for personal prayer and reflection. It acts as a focus for the contemplation of spiritual and moral issues, particularly for Key Stage 4 pupils.

40. There is a broad range of generally high quality extra-curricular activities for all pupils. This is a particular strength of the school. The programme includes sports, music, drama, art and opportunities for travel abroad.



41. The school should consider how it might further enhance opportunities for pupils to experience the wider cultural diversity that exists within Britain today.

5.2 Behaviour and Discipline

42. The quality of pupils' behaviour, both in class and around the school, is good. Pupils show high levels of self-discipline and commitment; they are able to work independently without close supervision; they are motivated and enjoy school. The school has a strong sense of community and family. Overall, the pupils' behaviour in and around the school supports high standards of achievement and effective learning.

43. Pupils are polite, helpful and friendly to adults and are considerate to each other. There is a formal code of conduct linked clearly to the school's mission statement. The code of conduct includes procedures, rewards and sanctions. The pupil monitoring system, which identifies pupils for praise, is particularly effective. Letters of commendation sent home to parents are especially appreciated by both parents and pupils. The credit system for Years 7 and 8, the system of pupil reviews and the school's records of achievement are also well regarded by the pupils and have a positive impact on expectations.

44. The governing body has a written policy on discipline. The criteria for exclusions are based on a need for the consideration and respect of others in the school community, especially the impact on the teaching and learning of others. There is a commitment to involving the school counsellor before a pupil is excluded and on the return of the pupil to the school. Clear procedures have been established for referring incidents of difficult behaviour in the school. The procedures are effective and incidents are dealt with at the appropriate level. Bullying is rare.

5.3 Attendance

45. The attendance record of the school is good. The incidence of unauthorised absence is very low in all year groups and forms. There are written procedures for reporting pupil absence and punctuality which are understood by pupils and teachers, but not always by parents. A deputy headteacher and heads of year liaise with the LEA's educational welfare officer on a weekly basis for referrals to be passed on. The keeping of class registers for each lesson is inconsistent although there is no evidence of internal truancy.

46. Procedures for monitoring punctuality are less satisfactory. The range of lunchtime extra-curricular activities, the very large numbers staying for school lunch and the school's "one-way system" are all contributory factors to late arrival for afternoon lessons. Reasons for lateness are, however, not always followed up. The school is not complying fully with the regulations in DES Circular 11/91. An attendance register is not completed at the beginning of the afternoon session. Attendance registers are not always accurately completed although written guidance on their completion is given by the school. The ten minutes registration at the end of the afternoon is efficiently carried out but the school should consider whether the period is an effective use of time.

6. SUBJECTS OF THE CURRICULUM AND OTHER CURRICULAR PROVISION: SUBJECT EVIDENCE FORM

English

47. Standards of achievement are good. Recent GCSE results in English and English Literature are above the national average. In almost all the lessons observed at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 pupils were attaining standards that were satisfactory or better. In about half they were good or very good. Some exemplary work was seen, particularly at Key Stage 4.

48. Oral work is a notable strength of the department. Pupils are generally open and sensitive towards each other. In small groups they help one another express ideas or opinions; they are able to keep on task for long periods and to work independently of the teacher. Thorough records are kept of the pupils' oral work. The good work done in drama lessons and clubs, and in some pupils' involvement in various public speaking competitions, encourage high standards of speaking and listening.

49. Pupils benefit from a varied range of texts: as well as class readers, more books are available in the classrooms and the school library has an excellent stock of fiction. Pupils keep reading diaries and are encouraged to express opinions about books they have read. Standards of reading aloud are higher than might be expected, particularly among children in the lower ability sets. Some very good written work on literature was seen, especially from abler pupils studying for GCSE.

50. The presentation of written work is generally good and efforts are currently being made to improve standards of spelling. The scheme of work for English encourages a wide range of writing for different purposes and audiences. Redrafting and the careful improvement of written work is part of the routine of the department.

51. The quality of learning in the lessons was never less than satisfactory. In two-thirds it was good or very good. Pupils responded positively to specialist English teachers whose knowledge of the subject is good. Lessons are well prepared. Written work is constructively marked. Schemes of work, agreed by the department, provide a consistent framework which allows for individual style and initiative. Frequent, minuted meetings are held. The quality of teaching in lessons observed was always satisfactory and often good.

52. The department is well run. Necessary systems for pupil assessment, national curriculum coverage and routine administration work well; resources of books and materials are adequate; English teaching rooms are near to each other and to the library.

53. The strengths of the department are in the quality of its specialist staff, the good relationships between teachers and taught and its agreed policies, schemes and systems. It should now establish clear priorities for the future.

Drama

54. Standards of achievement are good. In both creating and appraising their work pupils show impressive levels of concentration and co-operation. GCSE results are above average. Drama adds to the quality of speaking and listening in English and there are planned and productive links between the two subjects: the assessment of spoken English is a joint responsibility. The drama studio is well used and contributes positively to standards in the subject. Drama clubs, performances and visits enhance the artistic and social life of the school.

Mathematics

55. Standards of achievement were satisfactory or better at Key Stage 4 in all lessons seen and in over half of these they were good or very good. At Key Stage 3 the standards of achievement were broadly similar with nearly 80% satisfactory or better.

56. Results at GCSE were good in 1993 with 54% of pupils gaining grades A-C. This was an improvement on the previous year. A small group of Year 10 pupils sit GCSE statistics with almost 95% gaining grades A-C. These results are above national averages. The results are also good for pupils of average and below average abilities. There is, however, evidence to suggest that results could be improved for the ablest pupils.

57. The mathematics taught in the department is broad and balanced. The complete range of Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study are taught. Assessment is thorough with appropriate reporting and recording. The department is well resourced with text books and equipment, including micro-computers and calculators. Calculators are particularly well used. This results from appropriate emphasis placed on numeracy by the department where mental skills and pencil and paper calculations are of a good standard. The department has adopted information technology into its teaching but few examples of its use were seen.

58. In the main, mathematics is taught by teachers well qualified in the subject. Where this is not so, the school could do more to help. These teachers work hard to improve their teaching of mathematics.

59. To allow for sets of less able pupils to be smaller, some classes contain over 30 pupils. Most mathematics rooms are, however, small. So these large groups have little room to work and to move. Four of the mathematics rooms are close enough together to share resources, but two other rooms in which mathematics is taught are some distance away, making communication and support difficult. The department is well managed with policies and schemes of work in place. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent across the department and there is no monitoring of teaching and of learning in the classroom.

60. Most of the teaching is methodical and appropriate to the topic but the structure of lessons and their pace needs some attention. Pupils are generally keen to work; they work hard if, on occasions, a little noisily. They listen attentively, answer questions and settle to their work as individuals or in pairs. They usually support each other. Relationships between pupils and between teachers and pupils are good.

Science

61. Standards in lessons were generally satisfactory or better in relation to pupils' abilities although sometimes they did not meet national norms. The quality of learning was always satisfactory or better and the teaching was in most instances good with some outstanding lessons. Pupils work hard, are well behaved and are interested in their science. They are able to discuss what they have learned with confidence and with understanding. The quality and organisation of practical work are good and well-structured lessons support learning. However, pupils are given few opportunities to develop their own ideas. Work is well presented and marking is generally rigorous with helpful comments. The GCSE results in 1993 show a marked improvement over the previous year and are above national averages. Girls did not perform as well as boys but efforts are being made to improve their attainment.

62. All pupils study science throughout their five years and are entered for a GCSE examination. Pupils with special educational needs are given the opportunity to study worthwhile science courses but would benefit from the provision of learning materials that are written specifically for them. There is a lack of extension material for the most able. In lessons there is a need to give more consideration to the learning of individual pupils. Girls and boys show confidence in their understanding of science and in lessons perform equally well. Schemes of work would be improved if written to an agreed format.

63. Teachers are well qualified and their expertise is used effectively. The department needs to consider how all aspects of its work are to be managed and how policies are to be developed for the benefit of pupils. Pupils are organised into sets based on ability but there is little opportunity for movement between them. The technician provides a good quality service to the department.

64. The quality and provision of equipment are satisfactory. Textbooks are available for lessons but pupils are not able to have books for use at home. Other resources for learning are well used.

65. Although there is not a written safety policy, practice in lessons is good and all the requirements of legislation are being carried out.

Design and Technology

66. At Key Stage 3 standards of achievement in design and technology, both in relation to national norms and to pupils' age and capabilities, were satisfactory in about three quarters of the lessons observed. Pupils show competence and confidence when using tools and equipment. They are able to work independently and are prepared to persevere with the making of their products, but they show limited knowledge of the principles of investigating, designing, manufacturing and evaluating. The teaching places more emphasis on technology attainment target 3 (making) than on these important skills. At Key Stage 4 GCSE examination results were significantly below national averages and standards in lessons were lower than at Key Stage 3.

67. Lessons in both Key Stages were well planned and resourced. The pupils' motivation and concentration is good in all areas. They are able to work in construction and food without close supervision, but on the whole progress in terms of understanding is slow. Opportunities for



initiative and independent thinking, for the application of knowledge gained in one area of technology to another and for the evaluation of work are limited. The teaching is generally sound but unadventurous. Teachers' expectations for the more able pupils at Key Stage 3 are not high. Pupils are not challenged or stretched sufficiently in either the food or construction areas. There is often a lack of opportunity for pupils to express themselves within the very tightly structured projects and tasks. Class organisation, control and competence in subject content are good at both key stages. Pupil health and safety is addressed appropriately in all areas.

68. The department lacks a comprehensive development plan designed to outline the steps which must be taken to meet the statutory requirements for technology. Current schemes of work do not cover the national curriculum programmes of study. Although marking is generally up to date, no assessment policy relating to the attainment targets in technology exists for the subject as a whole. Subjects within technology tend to work and plan in isolation. The curriculum does not at present ensure continuity across key stages or deliver fully pupil entitlement in the subject.

Information Technology

69. The school has a good number of computers but many will soon be in need of replacement. At Key Stage 3 the delivery of information technology is broadly satisfactory, but there are some inconsistencies in provision over the various elements within the statutory order for technology. At Key Stage 4 there is a need for the school to plan carefully to ensure coverage of information technology across the curriculum within timetable arrangements that place it within design and technology. At present there are too few systematically planned opportunities for pupils in both Key Stages to use information technology in other subjects. The school is beginning an in-service training programme for staff, necessary if progress is to be made.

Modern Foreign Languages

70. Standards of achievement at GCSE are satisfactory in French. Spanish is now in line with the national average. Standards in Key Stage 3 were good in almost three quarters of lessons seen, particularly in Years 7 and 8. Most pupils are comfortable with the foreign language and confident when speaking it. Their accents are good. Reading is better than average. Writing, whilst variable, is satisfactory. Standards in Key Stage 4 are largely satisfactory but only rarely better than average. Here children are much more confident with the written than the spoken word. Listening and speaking are often underdeveloped.

71. The quality of learning observed in Key Stage 3 was often good. Many learners are making clear progress. They hear the language throughout the lesson and use it orally in purposeful pair work. Writing tasks go beyond copying. The new text books are lively and appropriate. In Key Stage 4 there was lively work from a minority of groups but otherwise the quality of learning was moderate. Learners were very passive in most classes observed. They are often only asked to translate or to copy from the board; English predominates and listening is confined to comprehension practice. In both Key Stages learners work hard and show good levels of concentration and commitments.



72. The quality of teaching is most satisfactory in Key Stage 3. In National Curriculum classes most teachers have begun to insist on the use of the target language in the classroom and use text books more flexibly. In Key Stage 4 teaching is thorough but in about half the lessons observed delivered almost entirely in English at a somewhat ponderous pace whilst learners listen or write. In some cases the teacher simply works through the text book, and skills are taught separately rather than in natural combinations.

73. All pupils take a foreign language at the school but National Curriculum classes do not yet have regular access to computers and opportunities for independent reading. Accommodation is generally good despite some acoustic difficulties. Resources are good, but in some cases are not always being used in a planned way. Planning is heavily dependent upon the Head of Department and lack of teamwork has slowed down National Curriculum preparations.

History

74. Standards of achievement were satisfactory or better in the majority of lessons observed at both Key Stages. GCSE results are good and well above the national and LEA average. Pupils display a good understanding of historical ideas: the more able use historical terms accurately and apply their knowledge appropriately though less able pupils experience difficulties in understanding cause and effect. Standards of written work vary but are largely satisfactory and pupils are able to talk with confidence about their work.

75. The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory or better in most lessons observed. It was good in all lessons seen at Key Stage 4. History is taught by suitably qualified and experienced staff who, when teaching is good, provide clear lesson objectives and appropriate activities and have high expectations of their pupils. Pupils in general work hard in their lessons, are attentive and make good progress. In some lessons, however, teaching approaches and activities were less varied and pupils, though attentive, made less progress. Support for pupils with special educational needs is provided but the department is aware of the need to improve its provision for more able as well as less able pupils.

76. Management and administration of the department is adequate. Most important policies are in place but need to be developed further. Assessment and recording procedures have been revised to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. However, schemes of work do not clearly identify how all the statutory elements of the National Curriculum are to be met, for example cross-curricular themes and dimensions.

77. Resources for learning are not adequate to provide pupils with the range of resources needed for effective coverage of National Curriculum history and the work-sheets used are often badly produced and over complicated. Provision for Information Technology is poor and the department is not satisfying statutory requirements in this area. Accommodation is adequate but classrooms are small for the numbers of pupils in some sets, thus limiting the learning activities which can be offered. More use could be made of display areas to show pupils' work.



78. The staff of the department are highly committed and work together in a purposeful and professional way. Building on this strength, attention now needs to be given to improving the quality of planning and departmental documentation. Planning, in financial and professional development terms, should look towards establishing adequate resources for the introduction of the new syllabuses at Key Stage 4.

Integrated Humanities

79. Integrated Humanities is studied as an alternative to history and geography in Key Stage 4. Pupils are drawn from the middle and lower ability sets in Year 9. Standards of achievement are less than satisfactory and do not in all cases reflect the capabilities of the pupils concerned.

80. Standards of learning and teaching in the lessons observed were generally satisfactory though some were poor. Pupils received adequate guidance from the teacher, though the language and difficult levels of the worksheets were often not appropriate for these pupils. Lessons observed were largely teacher-led, followed by individual work based on worksheets. Learning tended to be passive and in some cases lack of motivation and response to the subject matter was evident.

81. It should be questioned whether this course is more appropriate for the pupils who take it than the GCSE syllabuses in history and geography which are offered to the more able pupils.

Geography and Geology

82. Standards of achievement at Key Stage 3 and 4 are satisfactory or better and GCSE examination results in both geography and geology are good. In geography they are above national norms. There is a good understanding of problem solving and the skills necessary to analyse data. A sound knowledge of places is also evident.

83. In both Key Stages pupils are attentive learners, respond positively to instruction and express their ideas well through discussion. Written work is of a good quality and maps and diagrams are well presented. Relationships are positive. In the better lessons the purposes of the teaching is clear, and instruction is unambiguous. An understanding of geographical processes in both human and physical geography is evident. However, there is an over emphasis on teacher delivery and instruction. Opportunities are missed for pupils to develop wider skills in group activities and in independent learning. The use of worksheets is widespread, but these are not always understood by pupils. The range of textbooks and other materials is limited.

84. The planned curriculum meets statutory requirements. Some further attention to detail to organisation should enable the present good standards to continue. In particular, attention should be given to the contribution of geography to cross-curricular themes and dimensions such as information technology. The allocation of curriculum time at Key Stage 3 places constraints upon the teachers to deliver fully the programmes of study for geography. A marking policy exists. Books are seen regularly and some contain positive and constructive comment. Moderation of standards across classes and teachers, however, is not a recognised working practice.



85. All lessons are taught by qualified and experienced teachers and an initial development plan is in place. This fails to reflect fully the whole school plan, and is not supported by a detailed action plan which indicates resourcing, professional development needs and costings. Means of measuring the success of initiatives should also be developed.

86. In geology samples and textbooks are good. However, in geography there is a limited range of resources to support teaching and learning. There is much emphasis on photocopied textbook extracts and worksheets, which are minimally adapted for use by all abilities of pupils. The use of information technology, aerial photographs and the local area is undeveloped. The geography section in the school library has limited texts. Two of the teaching rooms have inadequate facilities for display and one lacks space for more flexible use as a teaching area.

Music

87. Standards of achievement are good. The department provides a stimulating, industrious and exciting musical environment for pupils to enjoy. There is variety and depth in the quality and range of activities and less able pupils as well as the most able are challenged and given freedom to develop their musical ability at an appropriate rate and level. Much hard work has gone into the planning, management and implementation of a balanced programme of work for all pupils in Key Stage 3 and a GCSE group in Key Stage 4. Teaching and learning styles contribute to an atmosphere of genuine eagerness to participate in all aspects of music; pupils understand their tasks, respond well and make progress. At Key Stage 3, the time allocation for music is adequate but the concentration of the twelve week module may restrict pupils' capacity to retain musical skills and knowledge and may prevent progress. Processes for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress are systematically maintained and help to guide subsequent work. Extra-curricular activities add a rich element to the cultural life of the school and the community. The department has been generously supported from the school's resources by the PTA and through departmental fund-raising resulting in a growing store of good quality equipment. Expectations are high and pupils respond enthusiastically. The department values and is valued by pupils; it has the potential to reach even higher standards than at present.

Art

88. In all the lessons seen standards were satisfactory or better, with 50% being good in relation to the pupils' ages and capabilities. Recent GCSE examination results show a marked improvement and are close to national norms.

89. Throughout Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 skills of observation and recording are good and many pupils are able to use the visual elements of line, tone and colour well in their illustrative work. Three dimensional work in ceramics for all pupils is also well developed.

90. Sustained concentration, enjoyment and commitment were evident in the lessons and pupils responded well to advice and guidance in modifying and improving their work.



91. While pupils at Key Stage 4 use analytical skills as a basis for developing imaginative work of an expressive and technical nature, limited curriculum time at Key Stage 3 allows less opportunity to experiment and explore ideas in the wide range of media, techniques and scale required by National Curriculum.

92. Classwork at Key Stage 3 focused mainly on practical activities with only infrequent reference being made to the work of artists and designers. Tape recordings of childrens' literature were used imaginatively in the teaching programme to stimulate ideas for a future project for Year 7 pupils. Information Technology is used in the work of Key Stage 4 pupils, but wider development at Key Stage 3 is lacking.

93. Appropriate homework tasks are regularly set, marking is up to date and pupils are praised and encouraged for good homework. The respectful, relaxed and friendly relationships between staff and pupils are a positive feature contributing to the working ethos of the department and to the good behaviour of pupils.

94. Within the limits of the time available for art on the carousel system at Key Stage 3, the curriculum planning attempts to meet the requirements of National Curriculum but further consideration should be given to the structured integration and use of critical appreciation of the work of artists and art from other cultures within the practical work.

95. The department is well resourced and generously funded and the specialist accommodation, with adequate storage and well used display areas, provides a pleasant and stimulating environment for the teaching of the subject.

96. The school should review its provision for art in terms of time allocation to ensure effective delivery of the National Curriculum.

97. The department should consider planning for the integration of the attainment targets of National Curriculum Art and should devise a policy and strategy for the use of information technology at Key Stage 3.

PE

98. In physical education all pupils are inspired to learn and to achieve. They participate willingly in a wide range of set activities.

99. At both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 the level of achievement, in relation to their abilities, is generally good for almost all pupils.

100. In games, where pupils are confident and enthusiastic in a wide range of activities, the standard of achievement is particularly good. In gymnastics and at Key Stage 3 pupils work hard at refining and improving their performance to good effect.

101. In over three quarters of the lessons seen across Key Stages 3 and 4 the quality of learning was good. Pupils took every opportunity to develop their skills in an ethos of high expectation and enjoyment.



102. All teaching at Key Stages 3 and 4 was sound. In three quarters of the lessons seen it was good or very good. It was generally well planned and well delivered. Each module of the PE programme is supplemented by extra-curricular activities appropriate to that area of work, and many pupils take advantage of this opportunity to develop their skill further.

103. The department is very well led and operates as an effective team. The members plan together and support each other to ensure a consistency of effort and achievement among pupils of all ages and abilities. There is a department development plan and appropriate assessment procedures are in place. The quality of the relationships that exist between pupils and staff are good. The department is well supported by the headteacher and by parents.

104. The excellent facilities available are efficiently and effectively used to ensure that all pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum.

7. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE FINDINGS

7.1 Quality of Teaching

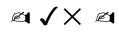
105. The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 85% of lessons observed, in 50% of which it was good or very good. One of the main strengths of teaching in all subject areas is the quality of the relationships between teachers and pupils, which is characterised by a supportive, encouraging approach within a framework of mutual respect.

106. When teaching was at its best objectives were clearly set and work was appropriately challenging. Careful preparation and structuring enabled lessons to proceed at a good pace in a purposeful atmosphere within which high expectations led to good standards of achievement. These strengths were frequently seen in English, history, science, art, music and PE in Key Stages 3 and 4 and in mathematics in Key Stage 4.

107. Where teaching was less good aims were unclear, insufficient guidance was given to pupils, tasks were inappropriate and pupils were not given opportunities for independent learning. These weaknesses were particularly observed in technology and mathematics in Key Stage 3 and in Integrated Humanities and modern foreign languages in Key Stage 4.

108. The teaching styles of individual members of staff contribute to the variety of teaching approaches within and between departments, though in some there is little variation, as in history and modern foreign languages, from teacher directed, worksheet or book-led work. The school may wish to consider looking at teaching and learning styles in order to extend and develop these throughout the school and across the curriculum. This should be done in the context of developing techniques for providing, where appropriate, differentiated tasks which are specifically suited to pupils of all abilities.

109. Teachers in all subjects, with very few exceptions, show good command of their subject matter. Resources are generally well used, particularly in PE, art and music, though resources are inadequately used in technology and modern foreign languages.





7.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

110. The school is developing an agreed statement of policy on assessment but at present there is great variety in assessment practice: no common format or framework exists for schemes of work. So these vary in quality and content and are inconsistent in identifying clear learning objectives and assessment criteria and assessment opportunities. Links are not always established with the National Curriculum attainment targets. Assessment is not commonly used to inform future learning. The marking of written work is inconsistent and although many teachers mark diligently and provide pupils with useful comments and suggestions, others do not.

111. In some subjects, English, science and music for example, assessment is carried out in a variety of ways which are fit for the purpose, including good oral and written work, and observation of practical work and investigations.

112. Teachers keep their own records of pupil progress the format and content of which is left to individual subject departments. These records are not always supported by samples of pupils' work. There is no whole school policy on the retention of evidence and on how assessments are standardised across departments. The implementation of an effective whole school policy for assessment, recording and reporting managed by an identified assessment co-ordinator should be undertaken as a priority.

113. The school devotes considerable time to subject profiles and to reporting to parents. Subject profiles differ in format and content according to department. They are completed at least twice each year and are collated and sent home to parents. The profiles involve subject teachers, form tutors (Years 7 to 9) and review tutors (Years 10 and 11) in reviewing individual pupils' progress. The school has set aside time for this during tutorials and assemblies. The system is valued by pupils, parents and staff. In Years 10 and 11, all pupils are involved in individual action planning and are issued with the National Record of Achievement (NRA) in Year 11. Procedures for monitoring the quality of the NRA have been established with a local consortium of schools. The monitoring system involves the Governing Body and local employers and is valued by pupils, parents and local employers. Written reports are sent home to parents once per year, based on departmental, computerised, statement banks. Parents are able to comment on both the profiles and reports. Parents evenings are held on an annual basis and attendance is good. Statutory requirements for recording and reporting are adhered to. The content of the statements of special educational need and their re-assessments also conform to statutory requirements.

114. The school receives information from its associated primary schools in a variety of formats. The inconsistency of presentation inhibits the school's effective use of the information received. Curriculum information received from primary schools is distributed to departments, but its use varies. There is little formal curriculum liaison with feeder primary schools on a subject level.

115. The Headteacher closely monitors and analyses GCSE results and the governing body is made aware of the outcome of the monitoring. Specific targets are set and strategies are identified for meeting them. Use is also made of the value-added data provided by the LEA.

7.3 The Curriculum

7.3 (i) Quality and Range

116. At Key Stage 3 the school provides a broad curriculum which includes all National Curriculum subjects and religious education. The arrangements for rotating music, art and drama, together occupying 10% of curriculum time in Years 7, 8 and 9, restrict progress in these subjects. In art there is insufficient time fully to cover all the elements of the National Curriculum. In Year 7 history and geography are taught alternately in half-termly block of time which creates problems of continuity. There is also insufficient time to cover Programmes of Study in both subjects. A second language - Spanish - is introduced for some pupils in Year 9. It occupies 5% of curriculum time, which is not enough to study a National Curriculum language. The pupils who do not take Spanish do either extra French or extra maths and English. This work is poorly planned.

117. In most subjects pupils are placed into groups according to their ability. Each subject decides its own grouping arrangements and there is a mixture of setting and banding. The criteria used for grouping pupils often lack sufficient and clear definition. Movement between sets is restricted in some subjects and is sometimes constrained by organisational factors. Setting in one subject sometimes affects another. PE sets, for example, are determined by ability in RE and history and geography in Year 7 share the same sets.

118. At Key Stage 4 all pupils study English, mathematics, science, religious education, PE and at least one foreign language. More able pupils study either history or geography but lower ability pupils do an integrated humanities course. The GCSE results for this course are poor. About three quarters of each year group receive science for 20% of curriculum time. The others do single award science in 10% of curriculum time; in the remaining 10% they take a modular course. Here teaching and learning are satisfactory but the course is planned as a series of modules rather than as a whole. The school should review its Key Stage 4 provision, especially for lower ability pupils to ensure they receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Although all pupils do a technology course, they are not receiving a full National Curriculum entitlement. The food technology option is linked to a business education course which restricts choice for certain pupils. A small number of pupils study PE at GCSE level at a local tertiary college and in drama, art and technology provision is augmented by courses linked to the college; this is a significant enrichment.

119. Pupils in both Key Stages keep homework diaries and homework is set regularly in accordance with school policy. The school should improve its communication with parents over homework, particularly at Key Stage 4. Several attending the meeting for parents expressed confusion about the details of the policy and the use of homework diaries in Years 10 and 11.

120. It is the school's intention as stated in the current school development plan to address cross-curricular dimensions, skills and themes. The plan identifies Health Education, European Awareness and Economic Understanding as priorities for development and members of staff have been given responsibility for each of these areas. Progress in these and other cross-curricular areas has been slow.

121. There is a rich and extensive range of extra-curricular activities at lunch time and outside school time to which many members of staff devote a great deal of their time. For pupils, parents and staff this programme is a major strength of the school, adding significantly to its curricular provision.

7.3 (ii) Equality of Opportunity

122. The school has a comprehensive and detailed policy, linked to the values of the mission statement, containing a section on monitoring and evaluation which requires departmental schemes to include statements on equality of opportunity. Nevertheless, awareness of the policy among staff and success in carrying it out vary considerably among departments. Equality of opportunity is a priority in the current school development plan. A group of staff is charged with developing evaluation techniques and with making recommendations on equal opportunities (race). This provides a good basis for development.

123. All pupils have access at Key Stage 3 to the full range of subjects in the curriculum except for the second foreign language. Boys and girls achieve comparable success across a range of core and foundation subjects, though gender exerts an influence on pupil choices of subject at Key Stage 4. For example CDT and graphic communication attract more boys than girls, whereas Spanish and drama have more girls than boys. Issues such as sexual discrimination are dealt with in the personal and social education programme.

124. Some departments have analysed the varying performance of boys and girls and have taken appropriate steps. In science, for example, efforts are being made to ensure that girls are more fully involved and have the same opportunities as boys to achieve in lessons. In English conscious and successful attempts have been made, where appropriate, to have mixed groups for discussion.

125. About 6% of pupils are from ethnic minority groups. The school follows LEA guidelines on reporting racial incidents. There are few to report. Although the equal opportunities policy makes reference to race, it is a comparatively undeveloped area of school planning. The school should enhance its existing efforts to prepare pupils for living in the local and national multi-cultural society.

7.4 Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

126. Five pupils have statements of special educational needs. These pupils receive support from specialist teachers employed by the LEA and co-ordinated in the school by the Special Needs Co-ordinator. In general the provision is effectively targeted and matched to the needs of the pupils. The procedure for reviewing statements is efficiently carried out. There are no disapplications from the National Curriculum.

127. The school has a clear and wide-ranging policy for special educational needs which has been recently reviewed. A governor has been appointed to represent SEN and the department is represented on the senior management team. This is a good basis for future development.



128. Before their arrival in school, pupils are assessed in co-operation with contributory primary schools and, if necessary, by further testing from the Special Needs Co-ordinator. About 50 children are currently receiving support in Key Stage 3 as a result of this process. For English they are taught in small groups by members of the special needs department. The work in these groups is linked to the requirements of National Curriculum English and is well matched to the needs of the pupils. Good progress is made and standards are high, considering the age and capabilities of the pupils. They are particularly good in reading and in speaking and listening.

129. Less effective is the support given to pupils with non-statemented special needs outside the provision in English. Some in-class support is provided by the Special Needs Co-ordinator and by another 0.5 special needs teacher, but this is limited and depends more on the availability of staff than on pupils' needs. Where support teachers were observed in lessons the quality of support was good. The Special Needs Co-ordinator also has responsibility in the library which reduces the time available still further.

130. Attempts to adapt materials and teaching methods for SEN pupils are patchy. Despite the identification by each department of a teacher who takes particular responsibility for SEN pupils in the subject, there is little common understanding of the role of such staff and their expertise and commitment varies considerably. No whole school audit of expenditure on pupils with special educational needs has been undertaken. These deficiencies need attention.

7.5 Management and Administration

131. The management of the school reflects the strong Catholic ethos clearly expressed in the mission statement. United by common values in their dealings with staff, pupils, parents, parishes and the wider community, governors and headteacher work well together.

132. The governors are aware of their increasing responsibilities arising from the introduction of local management and, more recently, through the school's change of status from Special Agreement to Voluntary Aided. Structures and policies are being put in place to reflect these changing circumstances. A number of committees are operative with clear terms of reference. Job descriptions exist for all staff and are being effectively used in the appraisal process.

133. The headteacher offers good leadership. He works closely with the Senior Management Team which forms an efficient unit with complementary skills and qualities providing a balanced perspective.

134. A current school development plan exists but it does not provide a secure basis for cohesive whole school planning. It contains too many priorities and fails to distinguish between long and short term goals and between matters which the school is obliged to carry out and the school's own initiatives. The links between the whole school plan and departmental plan are not made clear. There are too few whole school monitoring and self-evaluation procedures.



135. The formation of key groups of staff to carry through and monitor agreed priorities provides a good basis for further improvement. Care will need to be taken to ensure that ad hoc groups, like that for equality of opportunity, or that for assessment, recording and reporting work in harmony with each other and with the standing groups of staff with responsibility for management, pastoral matters and the curriculum.

136. The role of the heads of department in the management and planning process is not sufficiently defined. The crucial part they play in school management and their responsibilities for the people, the resources and the effectiveness of their departments should be made clear by the senior management team.

137. Communication within the school is generally good. Simple and clear means of communication have also been established between school and parents, parishes and the wider community. This has helped to create an atmosphere of trust and openness. Parents speak highly of the speed and professionalism of the school's general giving of information and of its communication with the parents of individual pupils.

138. The everyday administration of the school works well. Systems are simple and understood by staff, pupils and most parents. The staff brochure gives clear information on all routines. Staff duties are conscientiously undertaken. Arrangements to provide cover for absent teachers are well managed.

139. Overall the school is well-led; it is an effective educational community. It should, however, streamline and clarify its planning and evaluation processes.

7.6 Resources and Their Management

7.6 (i) Teaching and Support Staff

140. The school is adequately staffed for the curriculum it offers. The staff is well qualified and experienced and the match between their qualifications and the subjects they teach is generally good. The exception is the mathematics department where some teachers are not specialists in the subject.

141. There is a staff development policy document which is linked to the school's mission statement. In general however, individual teachers are left to put forward their own staff development requests. At present these requests are not linked to the school development plan or to departmental development plans. It is hoped that the introduction of teacher appraisal and the formation of a staff development group will help to produce a more coherent approach.

142. There is an induction and support programme for newly qualified teachers, staff new to the school, promoted staff and students from higher education. An appraisal guidelines pack has been written to support the implementation of appraisal which has been sensitively handled. A suitable climate has been created. Procedures are clearly set out. Detailed school records are kept for whole school in-service and for individual teachers, although no costs are included. Training days are usually left to departments with whole school issues being dealt with on two out of the five days. There is only limited monitoring and evaluation of staff development and in-service provision.



143. Support staff are hard-working and make a significant contribution to the running of the school. Mainly good use is made of the technical support staff.

7.6 (ii) Resources for Learning

144. Overall the school is adequately resourced to deliver its curriculum. However, the requirements of the National Curriculum are highlighting some specific deficiencies. Resources are satisfactory in English, drama, mathematics, modern languages, art, music and physical education. In science there are too few textbooks to enable pupils to work at home with them. The range of resources used in history, geography and integrated humanities is limited. The modern languages department is well resourced, but as yet they are not always being used in a planned way. The quality and quantity of equipment and resources in the food area of technology are inadequate to delivery National Curriculum statutory requirements.

145. Resources in information technology are good with a ratio of computers to pupils of 1:9.22. However, there is no overall monitoring of the use of information technology within the school. There are two information technology rooms, one of which is especially well-equipped. Departments also have access to their own computers, but there is little evidence of systematic use of information technology across the school. The school satellite dish is also not fully utilised by departments.

146. The school has a generally well-stocked library and resource centre which in addition to wide selection of fiction and non-fiction books, also contains three CD ROM, a limited range of audio and video cassettes, magazines and resources for careers. Teachers are timetabled to supervise the library and individual classes and pupils make full use of the facility. It is available to all pupils during breaks and lunchtimes and is well-used. A major concern is loss of stock. The school is investigating installing a security system.

147. Funds for capitation are allocated to individual departments on a bidding basis. There is no obvious link to the school development plan or to departmental and curriculum development plans. There is no monitoring of expenditure on special educational needs or of the use of resources for non-statemented special educational needs.

148. Funds raised by the PTA have made a significant contribution to the resources for learning in the school: equipment purchased includes magazines for the library, equipment for the music and art departments and hymn books.

149. Full use is made of residential facilities, particularly for Year 11. Residential courses are held at Borwick Hall and Castlerigg Manor; these courses are often linked to Project Trident. There is also a residential week at Whitehough Camp School. Annual holidays are spent camping in France in the Summer and skiing in the Alps in Winter. There are field studies to Malham and visits to the Geological Museum in London and the Sedbergh Geological Trail. Use is made of visiting speakers in the RE and PSE programme. Local employers are used for Young Enterprise and for mock interviews with some of Year 11 pupils.



7.6 (iii) Accommodation

150. The school's accommodation is generally adequate for its current needs. Subjects are mainly grouped together in specialist suites, enabling nearly all teaching to take place in specialist rooms. However, many rooms are too small to facilitate group activities or those where movement around the classroom is required. Some areas suffer as a result of noise hampering oral and aural work. The science laboratories are in good condition and are well-maintained. However, in one laboratory electrical supplies are deficient and consideration needs to be given to upgrading. The quality of decoration, lighting and furniture in music is barely acceptable. Accommodation in art, physical education, the library and the upgraded information technology room is good.

151. Standards of cleaning in the school are very good. The site supervisors work hard. Pupils show respect for the buildings and the general environment. There is an absence of litter and very little graffiti. The grounds and playing fields are well-kept.

152. Some public areas are much enhanced by excellent art work and displays of pupils involved in school activities. Standards of display in classrooms are, however, sometimes poor - with an inappropriate balance between commercially produced display and that produced by the pupils of the school.

7.7 Pupils' Welfare and Guidance

153. The pastoral system is a strength of the school. The school rightly prides itself on its family atmosphere. The mission statement places great emphasis on pastoral care. Relationships in the school are excellent and reflect this family atmosphere. Mechanisms for supporting pupils, both formally and informally are effective. Form tutors and heads of year know the pupils in their charge and pupils are appreciative of this. Staff are efficient in exchanging information about pupils and the combination of careful monitoring and good personal relationships enables pupils to feel valued, promotes high expectations and instills confidence. In Year 11, Project Trident is particularly effective in encouraging pupils to accept greater responsibility. Well understood procedures are in place to help remedy problems and provide support. The school's pastoral management group is effectively led by a deputy head. Heads of year and form tutors feel that their views are listened to and are valued within the school.

154. There are effective written policies for liaison with outside agencies. The school has child protection policy and procedures which comply with the guidance in Circular 4/88.

155. There is school counselling service which is increasingly used by pupils. It is valued by pupils, staff and parents. The school sees the need to develop the service further.

156. Pupils are encouraged to discuss and explore issues relevant to their own development in religious education, personal and social education and careers, including a health education programme and sex education. An appropriate range of careers advice is available to all pupils through the teacher in charge of careers, through information in the school library and through the CD ROM in the library. Pupils receive



careers guidance during tutorial time in Years 10 and 11. This is satisfactorily supplemented by meetings for pupils and parents on GCSE options, links with the Careers Service and links with local colleges on post-training and educational opportunities.

7.8 Links with Parents, Agencies and Other Institutions

157. The school keeps parents informed through regular letters home, a weekly bulletin in the local newspaper, a weekly newsheet to each parish noticeboard, information meetings for specific items, parents' evenings, termly profiles or reports, monthly letters after monitoring progress and a pupil newspaper. Parents' evenings and open evenings are well attended. Parents welcome the quick response of the school to poor progress and to poor behaviour. They also appreciate the receipt of a commendation letter when a pupil is performing well. The PTA has helped establish valuable home/school links and raises an average of £3000 annually. The social function of the PTA is seen as at least as important as that of fund raising. PTA meetings and functions are always well attended by parents, teachers and pupils. The school is highly effective in enlisting parental support and co-operation. Currently, adults other than teachers are supporting two pupils in the classroom whose first language is not English. There is also strong parental support for music, drama and public speaking events. Links with parishes are strong.

158. The present Year 7 intake comes from 22 primary schools, but large numbers come from only four of these. Liaison with feeder primary schools ensures that pupils feel confident about their new school before they start. The head of Year 7, the headteacher, a deputy headteacher and the Special Needs Co-ordinator all play an important part in this process. All the feeder schools are visited at least once. However, the programme does not extend to curriculum continuity. The school should consider expanding its school development plan to improve curriculum liaison with primary schools. Records accompanying the pupil vary in content and format and are not always used by individual subject departments but they are used by form tutors and heads of year. Benefit would be gained from discussion with the feeder primary schools to use a common transfer record.

159. Year 10 pupils undertake two weeks work experience as part of a very good programme organised by Project Trident. Project Trident also enhances the school's involvement with the community. The school is engaged in Young Enterprise. There are established links with industry and commerce through TVEI, Project Trident, Young Enterprise, Compact and Education Business Partnership. The monitoring of the record of achievement also involves local industrialists. The school has effective, established links with the District Careers Office, Sixth Form Units, Nelson and Colne College and Burnley College.